United Nations A/ES-10/497–S/2010/379

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
14 July 2010

Original: English

General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-fifth year

Identical letters dated 13 July 2010 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

We write today, once again, with a pressing sense of urgency, borne of our responsible and enduring commitment to a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. In this regard, I am compelled to draw your attention, and through you the attention of the international community, to the continuation by Israel, the occupying Power, of its illegal colonization campaign in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly its ongoing illegal attempts to change the reality on the ground in Occupied East Jerusalem through the expansion of settlements, home demolitions, evictions and the displacement of more of the city's indigenous Palestinian residents.

As you read the present letter, several Palestinian families are searching for shelter this night after the Israeli occupying authorities demolished their homes in Occupied East Jerusalem earlier today, 13 July 2010, under various dubious pretexts. This has included the demolition of the home of Inam Al-Tawil in Al-Shayah neighbourhood near Al-Sawahreh in Occupied East Jerusalem, a home that was built in 1996 and had never been fined. This illegal demolition of this home was carried out without warning or justification, and now the 14 people, including 7 children, who resided there are homeless and at risk of being completely displaced from the city as Israel pushes ahead with its attempts to cleanse the city of its indigenous Palestinian population.

Such aggressive and unlawful actions by the occupying Power have also made Musa Mashahreh and his family of six homeless. Today, Israeli bulldozers razed his home in Jabal Al-Mukaber, destroying the house along, including its water and electricity supply. Nearby, by three families in Al-Eisawiyeh saw the homes they were still constructing for their families turned to a pile of rubble and twisted metal by the demolition of the occupying forces. In the Beit Hanina neighbourhood, Israeli occupying authorities stormed a home belonging to a Palestinian family and emptied it of its furniture while bulldozers razed it to the ground.

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The continuation of such destructive and illegal actions by Israel, the occupying Power, is raising tensions in Occupied East Jerusalem and throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Such provocations must be quickly responded to in order to prevent the further escalation of tensions between the two sides and the destabilization of the situation, which will surely undermine the efforts to resume the peace process that are currently being undertaken in the form of the proximity talks mediated by the United States. Indeed, by so brazenly carrying out these home demolitions, Israel is seriously calling into question its credibility as a partner for peace and its commitment to a resumption of peace process negotiations according to the well-known terms of reference.

In addition to these illegal and provocative home demolitions, I regret to inform you of the approval by the Israeli occupying authorities in Jerusalem of the construction of 32 new illegal units in the illegal settlement of "Pisgat Zeev" north of Occupied East Jerusalem. Charging ahead with such illegal settlement construction and expansion, Israel is blatantly defying the unanimous and persistent calls of the international community to cease all settlement construction, including so-called "natural growth", including in East Jerusalem.

Regrettably, despite the international consensus that these actions are illegal, reprehensible and serve to perpetuate the conflict and do not serve the cause of peace, Israel, the occupying Power, remains intransigent and insistent on carrying out such unlawful and belligerent policies and measures, which are solely aimed at entrenching its control of the land it has been occupying by force since 1967. Such contempt for the international community and the continued breaching of the relevant provisions of international law and the many Security Council and General Assembly resolutions calling for the cessation of Israel's settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, should not be allowed to continue without consequences. The manifold and extensive repercussions that the continuation of this policy, and the escalation of tensions, pose for the prospects of the resumption of the peace process, and the very viability of the two-State solution, must be seriously considered and acted upon.

Today, I also wish to draw your attention to the ongoing attempts by international peace activists to break the illegal, inhumane siege by Israel, the occupying Power, of the Gaza Strip. At the time of the writing of the present letter, a Libyan ship carrying humanitarian aid for the besieged Palestinian civilian population in Gaza is sailing in the Mediterranean Sea towards the Territory. As you are aware, the occupying Power has issued a warning to the ship's crew to change its course and head to an Egyptian port or else be overtaken by force.

We urge continued attention to the developments in this regard, recalling, with deepest regret, the horrific scenes of violence and death inflicted by the Israeli occupying forces on the Turkish aid ship, the Mavi Marmara, less than two months ago. In this regard, we urge that all appropriate measures be taken to ensure the safety of the activists on board the ship and to prevent the further escalation of the situation, which would have far-reaching repercussions throughout the region as a whole. At the same time, we persist in our call for continued international pressure to compel Israel to fully lift its blockade of the Gaza Strip in order to ensure the regular and sustained passage of persons and goods, including all necessary humanitarian aid, reconstruction materials and commercial flows.

This is my second letter to you in less than a month's time with regard to the systematic and illegal campaign of colonization and aggression by Israel, the occupying Power, against our people and the prospects of peace. The urgent need for concerted and effective actions cannot be overstated at this time. The international community, embodied in the United Nations, has a legal and moral obligation to protect and advance the prospects for peace and ensure that Israel is not allowed, through its illegal actions on the ground, to impose a permanent conflict in the region while the international community seeks instead to secure a permanent and just peace. The land, rights and resources of the future Palestinian state are quickly disappearing and it is incumbent upon the international community to take actions that would ensure reversing this destructive course.

The present letter is in follow-up to our previous 371 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 2 July 2010 (A/ES-10/495-S/2010/356) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations